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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/812,315	03/30/2004	Mechthild Rieping	7909/81000	1764
7590	03/22/2006		EXAMINER	
Michael A. Sanzo Fitch, Even, Tabin & Flannery Suite 401L, 1801 K Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20006-1201			KIM, ALEXANDER D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1656	

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/812,315	RIEPING, MECHTHILD	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Alexander D. Kim	1656	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 October 2005.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Application Status

1. Claims 1-12 are pending in the instant case.

Restriction

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-9, drawn to a process for the production of an L-amino acid product, classified in class 435, subclass 106.
 - II. Claim 10-12, drawn to a microorganism from the *Enterobacteriaceae* family, classified in class 435, subclass 252.3.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

3. Group I and Group II are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product. See MPEP § 806.05(h). In the instant case the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product. For example, the bacteria can be used as host for plasmid transformation.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because the search required for any one Group is not required for the other Group as each Group

requires a different non-patent literature search using different keywords due to each Group comprising different products and/or method steps, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Election of species

4. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention: in Group I, each of the options in Claims 8 and 9 are distinct species.

These species are related in terms of gene products involved in cellular metabolism. However, the related species are distinct because they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants. For example, each gene is a distinct product because of distinct nucleic acid sequence. Each gene product enzyme(s) is made up of different amino acid sequences and folds into distinct 3-dimentional structure compared to each other. Each gene product carry out unique reaction inside a cell, thus species are distinct evidenced by the distinct structures and functions of the claimed inventions. In addition to their distinctness, the search of each gene and/or a gene product requires different keywords search in the database exclusively, thus searching species of claims 8 and 9 together would impose a serious search burden on the examination process.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution from each claim 8 and claim 9 on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claims 1-7 of the Group I are generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Notice of Possible Rejoinder

5. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 821.04. **Process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the patentable product will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier.** Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103, and 112. Until an elected product claim is found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowed product claim will not be rejoined. See "Guidance on Treatment of Product and Process Claims in light of *In re Ochiai, In re Brouwer and 35 U.S.C. § 103(b)*," 1184 O.G. 86 (March 26, 1996). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, Applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution either to maintain

dependency on the product claims or to otherwise include the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Election

6. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander D. Kim whose telephone number is (571) 272-5266. The examiner can normally be reached on 8AM-5PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kathleen Kerr can be reached on (571) 272-0931. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Alexander Kim
7 March 2006



KATHLEEN M. KERR, PH.D.
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER